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VENTURES

IN

VERSE

BY

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BUFFALO

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Buffalo

PAULS' PRINT
BUFFALO

A SYLVAN CEREMONY

“Kneel,” whispered the breeze.
On wistful knees
In the swaying grass I sank,
While, all around,
A soft choral sound
Swelled from bower and bank.

Two slender blows,
And I arose
Of sordid aims bereft;
By the accolade
Of a green grassblade
Ennobled and enfeoffed.

Now am I lord
Of weald and sward,
Fellow to leaf and flower!
Brook, bee, and bird
Have passed the word
That owns me from this hour!

APRIL FOOLING

“Whanne that April with his shoures
sote” —

O Chaucer, Chaucer, when those words
you wrote

You little dreamt that far across the sea
A new and broader Britain was to be,
Whose April, not content to “perce the
droughte

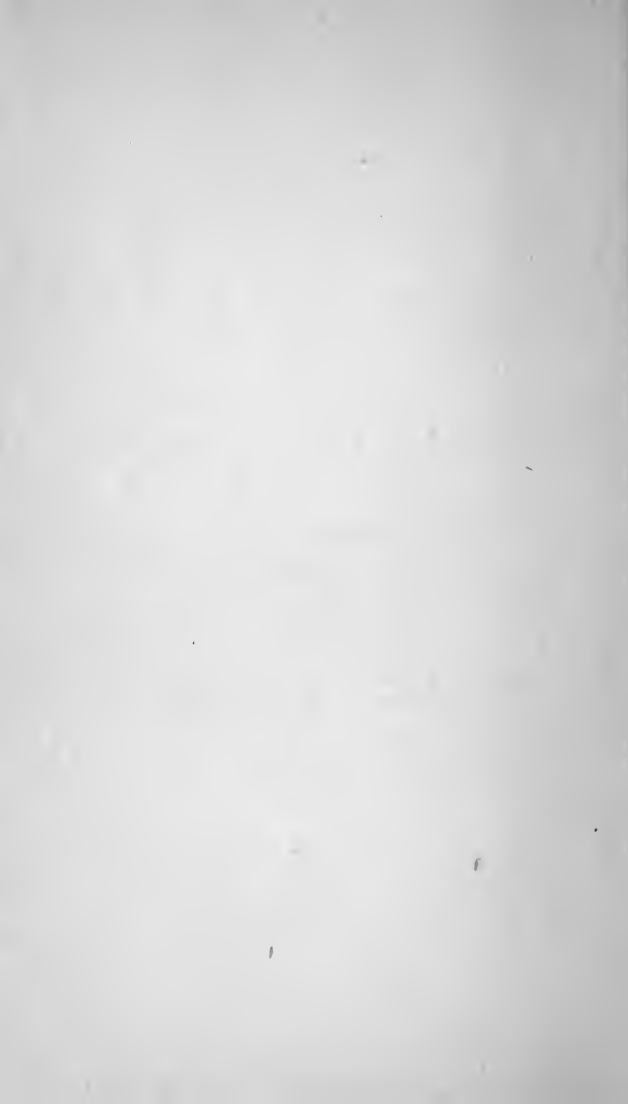
Of March” and drive the blust’ring fellow
out,

To summon the birds and buds, and cleanse
the way

Against the coming of his sister May,
Doth often backward reach, as now, and
seize

In sport the skirt of Winter as he flees,
Fling out the shred athwart the soft’ning
sky,

And almost make us doubt if Spring be
nigh!



A SPRING-DAY BILL OF FARE

BREAKFAST

A Sip of Morning Dew.

A Checkerberry or two. Young Leaves
with Honey Spread.

[Serve while the dawn is red.]

LUNCHEON

Violets from the Dell.

Watercress as well. White Ends of New-
pulled Grass.

Chips of Sassafras.

Dessert — A Sniff of that Breeze right
from the Orchard Trees.

Who after these craves dinner

Is a gourmand and a sinner.

OVERHEARD IN AUGUST

The song of Kisisqua, the brooklet, the
 silver-toned babbler,
Rehearsing the gossip of rushes to broad
 pebbly reaches,
Anon lightly telling of flower loves far in
 the glen.

The song of the westerly breeze, full of
 sweet meadow thoughts,
Orchard airs, garden fancies, fresh mem'ries
 of plenty afield,
With soft undertone of lament for the
 passing of summer.

The song of the cloudlet whose shadow
 slips down the green vale —
An exquisite strain, that just floats to the
 far edge of hearing;
A measure so fine that its melody dies at a
 look.

ON MURRAY HILL

Mount Morris, N. Y.

Over my head the whispering leaves,
Over the leaves the fair young moon,
Over the moon the silent stars,
Piercing earth's night with their myriad
noon.

IN THE RYE-FIELD

O reaper there, pray tell me, where
Goes all your golden grain?
“Why, some to mill, and some to still,
And some into the ground again.”





FUGACITY

Quick, quick, my pen and paper,
For here's a thought —
A bright one, with a merry caper —
It must be caught !

Ah, now the elfin sprite
I'll bring to book !
A captive trim in black and white,
That all may look

And note its pretty paces : —
Alack a day !
The wary imp, by all the Graces,
Has skipped away !

GIRLISH LAUGHTER

O, chide her laughter not;
'Tis sweeter far, I wot—
So natural, so joyous, and so free —
Than prim or artful titter,
Or timid, tight-laced twitter,
Or delicately simpering te-hee.

Those swelling notes bespeak
Young blood and sound physique,
A conscience clear, an open heart and
whole.

They flood the place with gladness,
Submerging care and sadness,
And lave the tender edges of the soul !

A TAYTALLER'S EFFOOSION

Av all daintie dhrinks,
Shure the foinest, met'inks,
Not aven axceptin' Tokay,
Is the koind that's done up
In sawsur an' cup.
Oi mane an infoosion av tay.

Now some tay is Oolong,
An' some is too sthrong,
An' some's loike a whiff av owld hay.
Some's bitther, some's flat,
Some's wake, an' all that.
Oi calls *thim* illoosions av tay.

But the rale-ginnuoine-
Nonpareel-supperfoine-
Set-'em-up-from-beyant-the-broad-say-
Limmon-sugar-or-crame-
Wid-a-shmell-loike-a-dhrame —
That's Nora's infoosion av tay!

AUNT PHEBE VISITS THE CITY

It's skerce a week I've been in taown,
A-shoppin' an' a-chinnin',
An' O so busy runnin' raoun' ;
An' yit I am beginnin'
To feel a leetle homesick like,
To wish't I was away
From this great, hustlin', bustlin' place
An' back to ol' Nunda.

Yer city streets is straight an' wide,
An' smoother'n aour barn floor.
They's ev'rythin', an' lots beside,
Fer sale to Barnum's store.
Ye've tra-la keers an' bullyvards —
But jes' give me, I say,
Ol' sorrel Dan an' the road that runs
'Tween aour haouse an' Nunda!

Yer Buff'lo park is very fair ;
In summer it's reel pretty.
A-snuffin' of the breezes there
I most fergit the city.
But, my ! it ain't a sukkumstance
To the wavin' fields o' hay,
An' 'tater-lots, an' woodsy hills
That lies araound Nunda !

Ye've

Ye've here a glary 'lectric light,
An' there a dribblin' faountain.

I s'pose they cost a nawful sight,

But, la! they ain't wuth caountin'

Agin' the gigglin' brook that turns

Aour mill acrost the way,

An' the moon that shines like a new milk-
pan

In the sky above Nunda!

AUNT PHEBE RETURNS HOME

Well, here I'm back to ol' Nunda,
Accordin' to my wishin's;
Yit I can't settle daown, some way,
Into the ol' conditions.
I'm all the while reel restless like,
From thinkin', don't ye know,
Of what good times they must be havin'
Up to Buffalo.

They's alwuz somethin' new in taown —
A lectur', book, or sich;
An' neighbors keeps a-droppin' 'raoun'
To tea an' take a stitch.
But here, it's no use talkin', things
Is everlastin' slow —
Leastways, that's haow they 'pear to seem
Sence I's to Buffalo.

This Nunda road jes' makes me groan;
Ol' Dan has got the heaves;
I hain't no book but Natur's own —
An' naow *that's* short o' leaves.
The brook is froze; the mill-wheel's dry;
The moon, fer all I know,
Is common cheese. I wish't I hadn't
Went to Buffalo!



AUTUMN SONG

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
When wheat has wholly lost its head, and corn is on its ear;
When "Mr. Murphy" scans his dungeon bin with starting eye,
And life is just a horrid grind to barley, oats and rye;
When quakes the ruddy apple, quite be-cider self with fright,
And scenting roasts the turkey seeks a higher roost at night;
When the boy of small size large sighs heaves, and dreams—the greedy sinner—
Of a land where Cook is queen and life one long Thanksgiving dinner.

A SONG FOR THE SEASON

While returning our thanks for the good
things we've got,
Let us gratefully dwell on some things we
have not;
On the blessed immunities brought by
November.
Of such it were easy a score to remember.
Lo, is not the last plaguy house-fly now
dead,
To the joy of mankind, from sweet babe to
bald head?
And how restful these nights when no
insect pipes shrill
Of his call in relation to "that little bill."
True, the butterfly's gone, and departed
the bird;
But the swart street musician no longer is
heard,
Nor the huckster, apprising the town,
through his nose,
Of stale bargains in "Awringes! Appuls!
Tato-o-oes!"

Thus

Thus the catalogue each for himself may
 extend,
Till of sweet deprivations there seemeth no
 end.
Then up, all ye favored ones, stir the dull
 ember,
And welcome immunity-bringing Novem-
 ber!

MY "MACKINAW"

Farewell, my faithful Mackinaw,
Farewell! It is October,
When proper men put off the straw
And on the derby sober.

Farewell! Two frolic seasons through
Thou'st been a merry thatch;
But scorching sun and stiffening dew
Have done thee. Now the match!

Farewell! T'were better thou shouldst burn
Than crown some graceless bummer.
I'll save thy cinders in an urn
Marked, "Ashes of the Summer."

Farewell! For I'm a proper man,
And so, the match — But stay!
Come shine or shower, old hat of tan,
I'll wear thee one more day!

ANSWERED

I stood on the sounding shore,
I questioned the furious sea :
“ O, why in white anger uptossed ? ”

And out of the wild uproar
The answer came hissing to me :
“ Because I’m incessantly crossed ! ”

A WORD TO THE SOUR

When your seat you resign
To a lady, don’t lower,
Or speak in a whine.

When your seat you resign
Let the action be fine.
In politeness is power.

When your seat you resign
To a lady, *don’t* lower.



OF MY LADY

My Lady's smile it is the day;
Now bright and gay,
Now grave, now fading soft away.

My Lady's hair is a stream of gold,
Refined; down-rolled
In rippling waves of wealth untold.

My Lady's brow is a snowy plain.
One slender vein
Divides its calm expanse in twain.

My Lady's eye is a well of blue,
Wherein I view
The image of her lover true.

My Lady's cheek is a garden fair,
A garden where
The rose and lily blossom e'er.

My Lady's mouth — O heart! thy fate
Interminate
Is hid within that ruby gate.

MY HEART UNQUIET IS

Sweet Summer rules in emerald peace

O'er river, field, and glade.

But O, my heart unquiet is,

Because of a maid.

The ancient hills with verdure fresh

How beauteously arrayed.

But O, my heart unquiet is,

Because of a maid.

I note the bird's eve-song, the dew

Of morn on leaf and blade.

But O, my heart unquiet is,

Because of a maid.

ON FINDING HER COMB

O foolish trinket to forsake
The charge that has been thine !
I'd give my all, without an ache,
Could I but call it mine !

To nestle in a maiden's hair,
To guard her gleaming tresses,—
Who would not welcome that sweet care
A sluggish heart possesses !

Then hie thee back, thou vagrant comb,
Fair Rachel's locks to grace,
Nor ever dare again to roam
From such a resting-place !

UNFULFILLMENT

A life just flowering into womanhood —
A glorious young life, pure, strong, and
free,
Elate and purposeful, resolved to be
And do, enthusiastic for the good.
Ah, but the changeful years, the lures, the
stress
Of circumstance ! Lo, many lives have
passed
From that proud phase, only to bend, at
last,
Unto the brazen yoke of worldliness.

A PASTEL

To one within a garden wandering,
And dreamily demanding, right and left,
Saying, "What flower can with Her com-
pare?"

None made reply.

But, as he mused along,
With casual step, he felt anon a light,
Detaining touch upon his sleeve. He
paused,

And looking down, saw thorned unto his
side,

Heart-high, a perfect budding crimson rose.

With one elate beyond the garden passing
Went the sole flower which could with
Her compare;

Went a perfect budding crimson rose.

THE MILL-WHEEL

From the German

Down in a deep, cool valley,
Where turns a mill-wheel slow,
Once lived my best beloved,
Who left me long ago.

Her troth with me she plighted,
Gave me a ring — in vain!
That troth was lightly broken,
The ring, too, went in twain.

I would I were a minstrel,
To roam the wide world o'er,
And sing my song of sadness
As I passed from door to door.

I would I were a trooper
Far in the bloody fight,
Or by the embers lying
Upon the field at night.

Ah, when I hear the mill-wheel
I know not what I will —
I long to cease from living,
For then it would be still.

A WISH

O me, what would I not give for one
look (so he said)
On this fair world through the far-
dreaming eyes of yon maid !

WITH LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY

“ Ladder to Heaven,” some call it.
Heaven for me, O Girl,
Is just as high as your heart.
I plant this ladder ; I dare to climb.

TO ——

I call thee cousin of the rose,
Related to the lily,
Having with the violet
And marigold sweet kinship.
And for this I know it :
Lip, eye, brow, hair show it.

A VALENTINE

Dearest maiden, in verse —

(Rose, tell her the rest.)

Dearest maiden, in verse

I fain would rehearse —

Ah, have you not guessed?

Dearest maiden, in verse —

(Rose, tell her the rest!)

THE BUTTON SLIPPER

My Lady her foot

In a slipper hath put

So dainty it sets me a-sighing:

Heigh-ho! Well-a-day!

But off and away

With a slipper that needeth no tying.

THE LIGHT OF LIGHTS

O, a glorious thing is the light of the sun,
Bringing life, and joy, and love.

O, a noble thing, when the day is done,
Is the light of the stars above.

And a welcome thing is the light whose
gleams

Betoken the journey's end.

But the light of lights is the light that beams
For me in the eye of a friend.





THOUGHTS ON THE LAST LINES
OF TENNYSON'S "ULYSSES"

To strive, in all my strength, unceasingly,
With that low self which, counseled by the
world,

Doth ever plot to overcome my soul.

To seek, unswervingly, the highest truths,
The noblest friendships, and the purest joys,
Despising naught, and hoping everything.

To find that peace which fills the Universe,
That rest whereof they only can partake
Whose faith and trust are with the Infinite.

And not to yield — ah, feeble is this flesh !
Yet, if I ask it of th' Eternal, He
Will make me strong to hold and even to
gain.



INFINITE TRUST

Come poverty and want ;
Come sudden sickness, pain ;
Come stealthy, fell disease ;
Come dull, decrepit age.
Come envious, biting tongues,
Deceit, misjudgment, hate ;
Come loss of fame or place,
Of dear or dearest friend.
Come hopes' decay, come all
The undiscerning world
Deems worst in circumstance.
Lo, I have that within
Shall nerve my soul to face
The whole dread catalogue,
To meet them with a song !

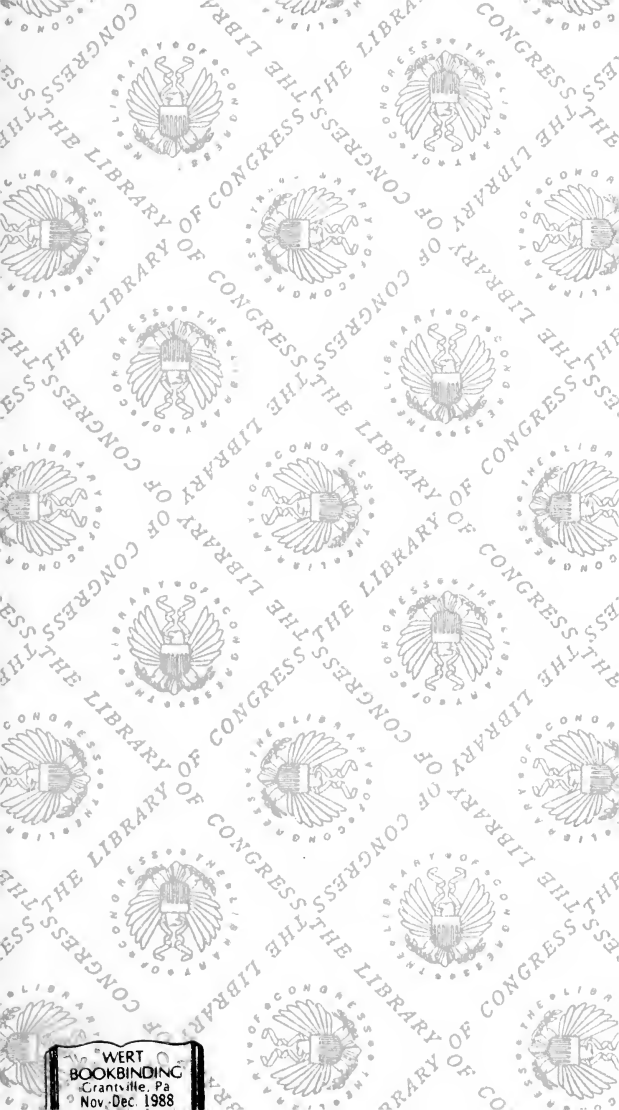
The Universe is pictured in the clod :
The voice of the cricket is the voice of God.

The lowly ant toils out her little year
Directed by no earthly engineer.

Rare secrets in the spider's web are spun,
Inviolable between herself and One.

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